

Stop consolidation of media ownership

Dear FCC Commisioners:

I am taking the time to comment on docket #02-277 which considers whether or not to relax media ownership rules enforced by the FCC. When I think back to the history of our country's founding, I am always heartened by the tales of Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Paine, and others who spread the news about events taking place so that citizens could be aware and make informed choices.

Of course, those days were much differnent from the media saturated, wired world we live in today. We are bombarded with a seemingly endless stream of advertising, entertainment, and something that purports to be news but is often cross marketing of Disney and TimeWarner of their latest offerings in the theaters or video store.

Getting hard-hitting news that tells me what is really going on behind the curtain is more difficult than ever before which is surely ironic given the amount of content flowing through fiber optics and bouncing off satellites these days.

One thing I noticed in the early 90's was the dumbing down of news and print journalism. Another thing I noticed was the trend toward media mergers. Of course, the only thing that keeps the trend from continuing apace is regulation against total media market domination.

Your agency is charged with giving us--the American public--a fair chance at receiving a diverse and open set of options to be informed of current events, and I feel relaxing the rules would not be in keeping with your mandate.

My mother works for a company owning a couple of affiliates down in FLorida. She has mentioned they cannot take over another company because of current regulations. I think this is healthy. I don't want 4 or 5 super large corporations holding a gigantic megaphone spouting whatever is in their interests. I don't want the few breathes of fresh air such as various independent media sources, progressive and libertarian magazines and papers, and other voices to be drowned out by the cynical and powerful interests of multinational media corporations such as Clear Channel, Fox Networks, Disney, AOL-TIME-WARNER, GE, and the like.

The government of the people and by the people is supposed to protect the interests of the people--not the powerful. Please reschedule the meeting of June 2, 2003, and please set up reviews of the data upon which you are basing your current decisions. Let there be a full review of the facts and a healthy debate of the issue rather than a cloaking of your activities on this matter.

Thank you for your time.

Regards,

Curtis Branson

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